

**FOOTWEAR VARIABLE TENSION LACING SYSTEMS****ABSTRACT**

5           Variable tension footwear lacing systems and methods permit and facilitate adjustment of selected zones by a user. In an embodiment, stop devices are used with a footwear lacing system to prevent opposing closure edges of a footwear article from advancing towards each other. The stop device includes a stop guide configured for fastening to a portion of the footwear article, and a stop element. In an implementation, the stop element includes a stop head and a releasable  
10   affixing member. The stop head is configured to be manipulated by a user to releasably secure the affixing member to a selected position across the length of the stop guide. The stop head is operable to contact a first closure edge of the footwear article. In an embodiment, during use first and second stop devices contact first and second opposing closure edges of the footwear article and prevent them from advancing towards each other.

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